Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application. Applicant has submitted a new complete claim set showing any marked up claims with insertions indicated by underlining and deletions indicated by strikeouts and/or double bracketing.

1-23. (cancelled)

24.   (previously presented) One or more computer-readable storage media having executable instructions stored there on that, when executed by a computing device, implement a method comprising:

    storing a preferences and settings database that stores user preferences and settings;

    executing an adaptive computing environment (ACE) engine on the computing device, the ACE engine continually monitoring data from sensors of the computing device to detect changes in environment of the computing device, the environment including a user of the computing device, the ACE engine continually monitoring data from one or more user input devices to detect user behavior while the user interacts with arbitrary applications, the ACE engine, in accordance with the monitoring, altering the preferences and settings and controlling features of the arbitrary applications that the user interacts with, the ACE engine executing separately from the arbitrary applications and adapting the computing device according to the preferences and settings database;

    providing a user interface, the user interface for displaying windows for different applications;

    detecting, by the monitoring of the ACE engine, when an anxiety level of the user has

increased; and

simplifying, by the controlling of user interface features by the ACE engine, the plurality of features provided to the user in response to the detected increased level of user anxiety, the simplifying comprising removing from one of the arbitrary applications advanced configuration options that are settable by the user to configure behavior of the application, the advanced configuration options comprising user interface components that can be manipulated by the user to set options affecting behavior of the application, the removing comprising causing the advanced configuration options to not be settable by the user thereby preventing the user from setting the configuration options by the user, wherein the ACE engine comprises an application separate from the application.

25. (cancelled)

26. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 24, further comprising determining whether the user wants the plurality of features to be simplified.

27-31. (cancelled)

32. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the anxiety level is detected via a galvanic skin response strip.

33-44. (cancelled)

45. (previously presented) One or more computer-readable media according to claim 24, wherein the detecting is performed with galvanic skin response.

46.   (previously presented) One or more computer-readable media according to claim 24, wherein simplifying further comprises displaying a hint, wizard, or help assistant.

47.   (cancelled)

48.   (previously presented)One or more computer-readable media storing information to enable a computer to perform a process, the process comprising:

storing a database of user preferences/settings;

monitoring an environmental state of the computer, the environmental state comprising information indicating levels of ambient light and sound received by the computer from its local environment, the environmental state further comprising information about peripheral devices attached to the computer, the environmental state further comprising inferences about a user's input or output needs derived from detecting patterns of use of an input device of the computer when using a plurality of arbitrary applications;

responsive to detected changes of the monitored environmental state, displaying user interface components configured to allow a user to indicate respective preferences/settings corresponding to respective detected changes of the monitored environmental state, and storing the indicated preferences/settings in the database of user preferences/settings;

according to the monitored environmental state and the inferences about a user's input, detecting user anxiety and in response automatically disabling advanced configuration options of one or more of the arbitrary applications such that functionality of the applications is disabled;

providing the stored user preferences/settings to arbitrary applications outputting audio and/or graphical data, the applications adapting how they render the audio and/or video data in accordance with the stored user preferences/settings; and

providing the stored user preferences/settings to arbitrary applications receiving input

from the user, the applications adapting how they receive or interpret user input according to the stored user preferences/settings.

49.   (new) One or more computer-readable storage media having executable instructions stored there on that, when executed by a computing device, implement a method comprising:

storing a preferences and settings database that stores user preferences and settings;

executing an adaptive computing environment (ACE) engine on the computing device, the ACE engine continually monitoring data from sensors of the computing device to detect changes in environment of the computing device, the environment including a user of the computing device, the ACE engine continually monitoring data from one or more user input devices to detect user behavior while the user interacts with arbitrary applications, the ACE engine, in accordance with the monitoring, altering the preferences and settings and controlling features of the arbitrary applications that the user interacts with, the ACE engine executing separately from the arbitrary applications and adapting the computing device according to the preferences and settings database;

providing a user interface, the user interface for displaying windows for different applications;

identifying, by the monitoring of the ACE engine of the use of the input devices, a behavior characteristic of the user, where the use of the user input devices comprises use that directs input to a plurality of different applications running on the computing device; and

simplifying, by the controlling of user interface features by the ACE engine, the plurality of features provided to the user in response to the behavior characteristic of the user, the simplifying comprising removing from one of the arbitrary applications advanced configuration options that are settable by the user to configure behavior of the application, the advanced configuration options comprising user interface components that can be manipulated by the user to set options affecting behavior of the application, the removing comprising causing the

advanced configuration options to not be settable by the user thereby preventing the user from setting the configuration options by the user, wherein the ACE engine comprises an application separate from the application.